

Message Text

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17

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 SAM-01 OMB-01 IO-14 AID-20

EB-11 DRC-01 /125 W

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE NIACT IMMEDIATE 053

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 2164

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR JA

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR YASUKAWA REPREMANDED

REF: TOKYO 2162

1. FOREIGN OFFICE AMERICAN AFFAIRS DIRGEN OKAWARA CALLED CHARGE LATE AFTERNOON FEBRUARY 16 TO INFORM HIM THAT DURING MEETING BETWEEN PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER EARLIER THAT DAY IT HAD BEEN DECIDED TO REPRIMAND AMBASSADOR YASUKAWA FOR HIS QTE IMPROPER UN-QUOTE REMARK DURING FEBRUARY 13 PRESS CONFERENCE IN WASHINGTON. OKAWARA EXPLAINED THAT REMARK IN QUESTION WAS YASUKAWA'S STATEMENT TO EFFECT HE WILLING TO BET THAT NIXON-TANAKA COMMUNIQUE HAD REFERRED TO IMPERIAL VISIT THIS YEAR.

2. SUBSEQUENTLY, IN EXPLAINING ACTION TO PRESS, CHIEF CABINET SECRETARY NIKAIDO NOTED THAT THERE IS NO WAY FOR GOVERNMENT TO TAKE ACTION LEGALLY AGAINST SUCH PUBLIC SERVANT AS AMBASSADOR. NIKAIDO ALSO NOTED THAT YASUKAWA HAS BEEN CARRING OUT IMPORTANT DIPLOMATIC RESPONSIBILITIES IN RELATIONS WITH US AND THAT HIS ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN APPRECIATED BY USG AND PRIVATE AMERICAN CIRCLES. (COMMNET: THESE OBSERVATIONS MAY HAVE BEEN DESIGNED TO COUNTER SPECULATION THAT GOVERNMENT MIGHT BE PRESSED BY OPPOSITION AND LDP HARD-LINERS TO RECALL YASUKAWA.) NIKAIDO EXPLAINED
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THAT IT HAD BEEN DECIDED THEREFORE TO ADMINISTER REPRIMAND BY

PRIME MINISTER. TEXT OF REPRIMAND AS READ BY NIKAIDO EXPRESSES REGRET THAT YASUKAWA'S STATEMENT, WHICH WAS NOT QTE WELL CONSIDERED UNQTE, HAS IMPAIRED TRUST OF PEOPLE TOWARD PUBLIC SERVANTS AND DIRECTS HIM TO EXERCISE MORE CAUTION AND CAREFULNESS IN FUTURE.

3. OKAWARA ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THAT THIS ACTION QUITE UNUSAL AND INDICATED THAT GOVERNMENT HOPED IT COULD THEREBY PUT END TO MATTER. HE NOTED HOWEVER THAT OPPOSITION CERTAIN TO ATTEMPT TO EXPLOIT INCIDENT IN DIET AND THAT FOREIGN MINISTER OHIRA HIMSELF VULNERABLE TO CRITICISM SINCE HE PRESENT AT FEBRUARY 13 PRESS CONFERENCE AND HAS ADMITTED THAT HE ALSO HAD BEEN MISTAKEN ON QUESTION OF TIMING OF IMPERIAL VISIT.

4. OKAWARA EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR DEPARTMENT'S SUBSEQUENT CLARIFICATION OF INTENT OF SPOKESMAN'S FEBRUARY 14 STATEMENT. AT SAME TIME, HE EXPRESSED HOPE THAT DEPARTMENT WOULD NOT BE DRAWN BY PRESS QUERIES INTO COMMENTING ON REPRIMAND GIVEN YASUKAWA.
SHOESMITH

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